1498 *A. punctidactyla* (Haw.) – Studham (**30**) 17.vii.95 – DVM; Selkirk (**79**) two 12.vi.95 – AME & JRL; Cornhill (94) vii.95 – RL

1500 *Platyptilia calodactyla* ([D.&S.]) – Gosberton (**53**) 11 & 13.vi.94 – M.A. Joy, PPRS

1504 *P. pallidactyla* (Haw.) – Cullen (**94**) vi.94 – MRY & RL

1506 *Stenoptilia millieridactyla* (Bruand) = *saxifragae* Fletch. Higher Poynton (58) 3–22.vii.94 – SHH

1507 *S. zophodactylus* (Dup.) – Beeley Moor (**57**) 2.x.95 – B. Statham per KVC

1508 *S. bipunctidactyla* (Scop.) – West Wood, Knotting (**30**) 14.viii.95 – DVM

1509 *S. pterodactyla* (Linn.) – Cornhill (**94**) vi.95 – MRY & RL

1518 *Hellinsia lienigianus* (Zell.) – Upton Warren (**37**) 1.vii.94 at light – J4 ANBS; West Melton (63) 31.viii.95 – HEB

1523 *Oidaematophorus lithodactyla* (Treits.) – Clayton Green (**59**) four amongst *Pulicaria* 31.vii.95 – SMP

Correction to 1994 Review

1494 *Capperia britanniodactyla* (Gregs.) – Record from Ballaglass misidentified – should be deleted.

***Ectoedemia quinquella* (Bedell, 1848) (Lep.: Nepticulidae) in the Reading area.**

I wish to report the discovery of the above species at Lower Earley, at Dinton Pastures Country Park and at Bear Wood near Wokingham. These sites are within four or five miles of each other situated to the south and east of Reading, Berkshire.

At Lower Earley, *E. quinquella* abounds on a group of oaks *Quercus robur* growing along a field boundary just south of of the River Lodden, near Lodden Bridge. Here I have seen mines for the past three or four years. Last year (autumn 1996) they were particularly abundant; one leaf I examined contained thirty-five to forty larvae. Adults have been successfully reared from this site on two occasions. Identical mines, though fewer in number, containing the characteristically spotted early-instar larvae were noted in the autumn of 1996 in oaks growing in Bear Wood near Wokingham and two adults were netted by day flying around oak trees during a meeting of the British Entomological and Natural History Society's Conservation Group held at Dinton Pastures on 7 July 1996. These sites are all located in the eastern part of Berkshire (VC22). Baker (1994, *The Butterflies and Moths of Berkshire*. Hedera Press) gives one locality in Berkshire for this species

since the 1930s, at Buckland Warren which is at the other end of the county from Reading. Further searches in the Reading area will be made in the coming autumn to ascertain the extent of this moth's distribution in the area.– I. SIMS, 2 The Delph, Lower Earley, Reading, Berkshire RG6 3AN.

Early appearance of *Macroglossum stellatarum* L. (Lep.: Sphingidae)

An adult Humming-bird Hawk-moth *Macroglossum stellatarum* was seen hovering over the flowers of Japanese quince in my garden here on 19 March 1997.– L. CHRISTIE, 129 Franciscan Road, Tooting, London SW17 8DZ.

***Spodoptera litura* (Fabr.) (Lep.: Noctuidae): a pest of a medicinal plant at 1685 metres (5500 feet) altitude in the Kumaon Hills, India**

During a survey of the insect pests of medicinal and aromatic plants in Central Himalaya, larvae of *Spodoptera litura* (Fabr.) were observed heavily infesting plants of Egyptian Henbane *Hyocyamus niger* – a source of trophane alkaloids – in the Kumaon Hills of India. *S. lituta* is known to damage jute, fibre crop, linseed, pulses and millet (Nair, 1986, *Insect and mites of crops in India*. Indian Council of Agricultural Research) and is a minor pest of bananas. David and Nandagopal (1986, Pests of sugarcane: distribution, symptomology of attack and identification, in *Sugarcane Entomology in India,* ICAR, New Delhi), reported it as an occasional defoliator of sugarcane. In the Kumaon Hills, the larvae were infesting the floral parts of plants during the months of August and September.

Egyptian Henbane is one of the more important medical plants and is a source of the trophane alkaloid hyoscine. Medicines prepared from the plant are used to treat a variety of diseases and ailments including worms, coughs, liver pain, heart disease, intestinal disorders etc. (Pant and Pandey, 1991, Kumaon Ki Upyogi aushadhiya vanasptiyan, *Uttrakhand Sodh Sansthan*, pp. 1-35). The plant occurs naturally in the middle hills of Central Himalaya at 2450 to 3370 metres (8000 to 11000 feet) altitude and has been introduced at lower altitudes for cultivation purposes.

The green larvae were collected and reared on the host plant in the laboratory. They emerged after twelve days in the pupal stage. Males and females survived for four and six days respectively. Under laboratory conditions, one larva was observed to devour one plant with five leaves in a single day. From the available literature, this would appear to be the first record of *S. litura* feeding on Egyptian Henbane in the Central Himalayas. We are grateful to Dr J.D. Holloway and the Director of the Institute of Entomology, CAB, London, for the identification of the insect.

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